


Department of Emergency Medicine  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

LETHAL MEANS SAFETY  
*for suicide prevention*

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@EmmyBetz

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Disclosures

Consultant:

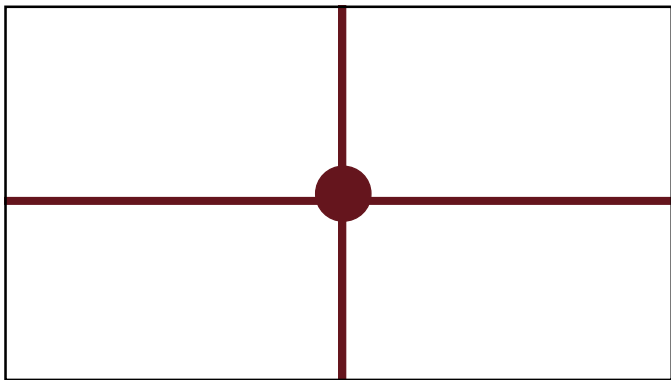
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- Colorado Suicide Prevention Commission (unpaid)
- Med-legal work

Funding:

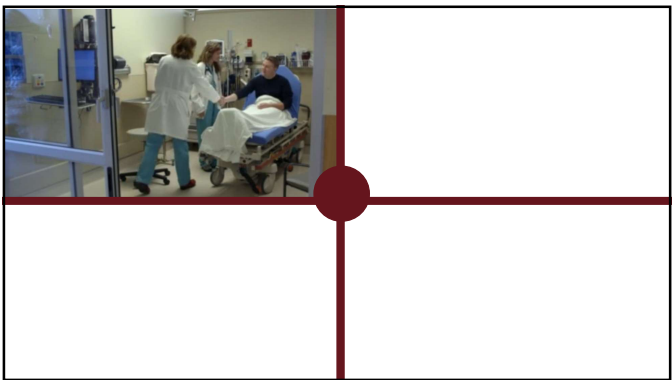
- NIMH R34 firearm decision aid (Betz)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- NIMH ED-SAFE trials (Boudreaux)
- NIMH Means Restriction in EDs (Runyan)

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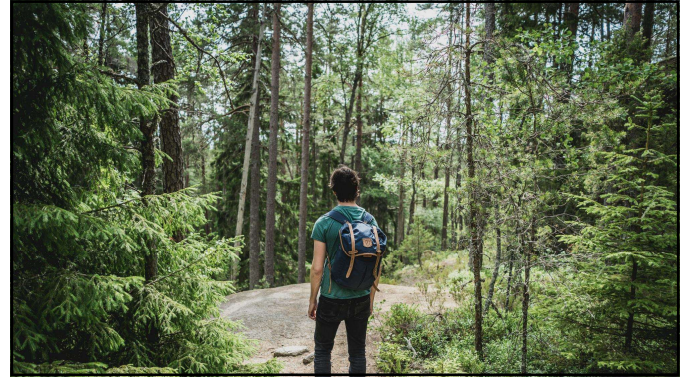
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**Overview**

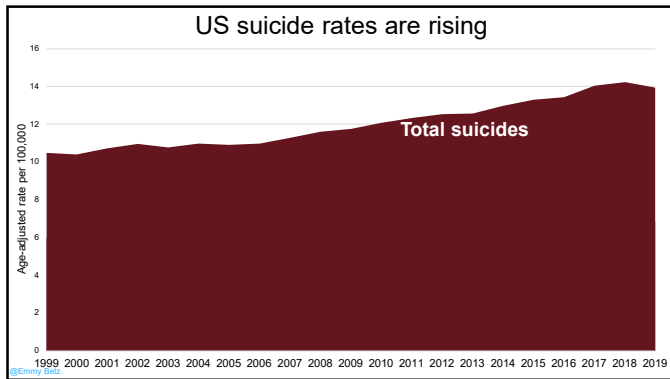
-  Background and rationale
-  Communication and counseling
-  Community resources

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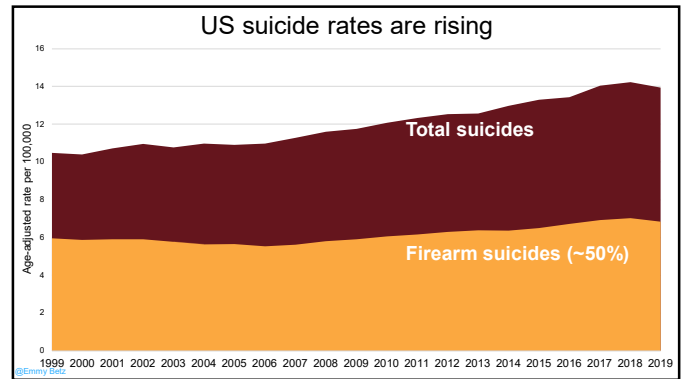


**Background and Rationale**

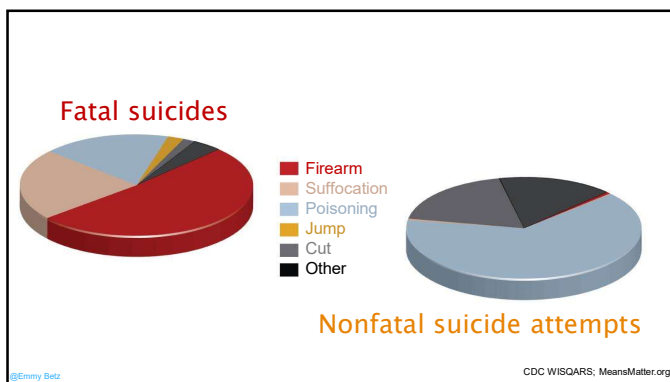
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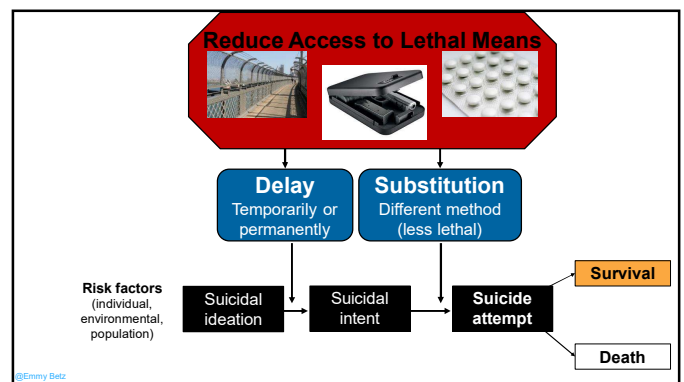
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**Sri Lanka:**  
Pesticides = #1 method of suicide  
1996: Banned most highly-toxic pesticides  
→ Suicide rates dropped 50% (1996 to 2005)

**Britain:**  
Domestic gas = #1 method of suicide  
By 1970, gas changed to be non-toxic  
→ Suicide rates dropped ~33%

**Israeli military:**  
Most suicides by gun, on weekend  
2006: Required soldiers to leave weapons on base  
→ Suicide rates dropped 40%

Gunnell 2007, Int'l J of Epidemiology; Kreitman 1976, Brit J Prev Soc Med; Lubin 2010, Suic & Life-Threat Behavior.

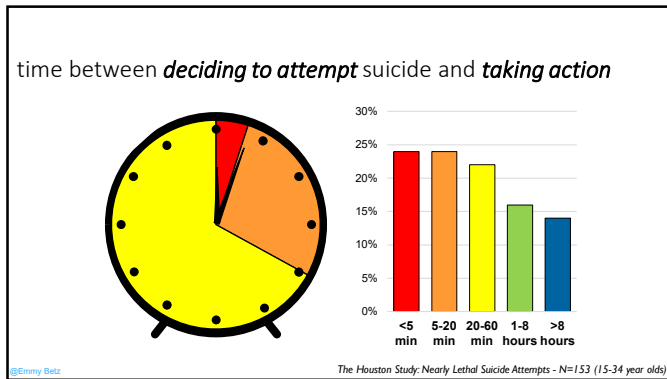
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**1. timing**

The final decision to attempt suicide often occurs within only **minutes**

Hawton K, Crisis 2007  
Deisenhammer EA et al, J Clin Psychiatry 2009

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## 2. prognosis

Only 10% of people with suicidal thoughts or behavior **later die by suicide**



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## 3. lethality

85-90% of people who use a gun to attempt suicide **die**



Spicer RS et al. AJPH. 2000

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**Where there are more guns, there are more suicides**

- States with more firearms have higher suicide rates
  - Differences in state suicide rates better explained by levels of household gun ownership than by mental health problems, suicidal ideation, or suicide attempts

Miller M et al. Annu Rev Public Health. 2012  
 Anglemeyer A et al. Ann Intern Med. 2014  
 Hemenway D. Ann Intern Med. 2014  
 Betz ME et al. Suicide Life Threat Behav. 2011

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- Gun in the home → >3x risk of completed suicide
- Adults in households with firearms are not more depressed or suicidal...yet far more likely to die by suicide

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 Anglemeyer A et al. Ann Intern Med. 2014  
 Hemenway D. Ann Intern Med. 2014  
 Betz ME et al. Suicide Life Threat Behav. 2011

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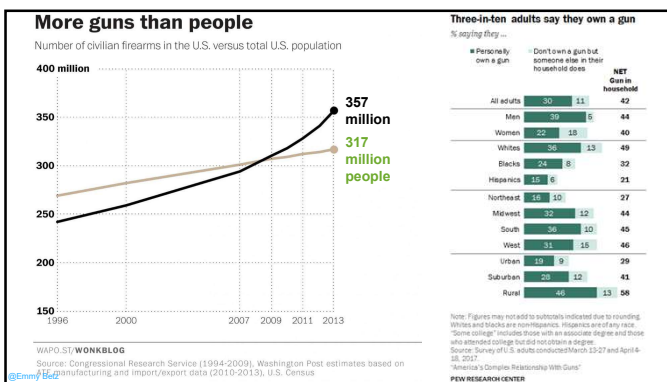




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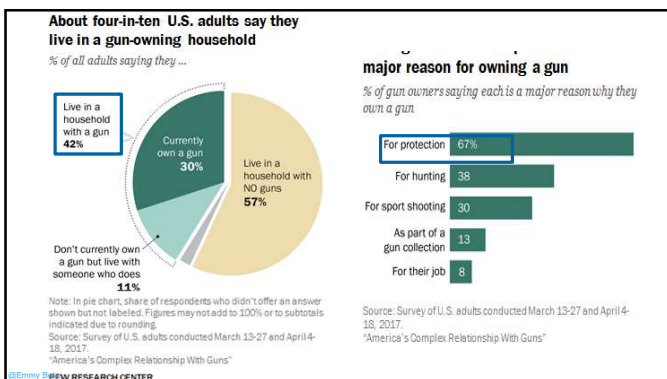
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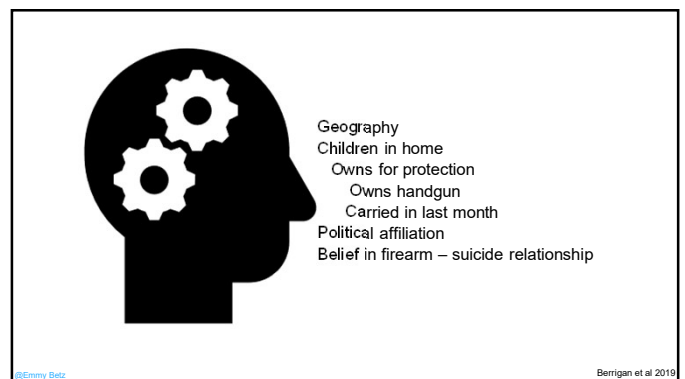
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## In home storage options

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## Out-of-home storage options

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- Universal background check law**
  - Background checks required for gun sales from a federally licensed dealer and also for private sales
  - Must be completed before any transfer (check is on proposed transferee); check often run by a licensed dealer
  - ~\$7, takes ~15 minutes

McCourt et al. Temporary Transfer of Firearms From the Home to Prevent Suicide: Legal Outcomes and Recommendations. JAMA Intern Med. 2017; Jan 1;177(1):96-101

Table. State Laws Affecting the Temporary Transfer of Firearms as of July 2016

State	Law	Law Applicable to Transfers, Law Gun, or Both	Relevant Exemptions Affecting Temporary Transfer Not Suicide Prevention
Alabama	None	NA	NA
Alaska	None	NA	NA
Arizona	None	NA	NA
Arkansas	None	NA	NA
California	Cal Penal Code § 27505 (2016)	USC without permit	Both
Colorado	Col Rev Stat § 18-12-117	USC without permit	Both
Connecticut	C.G.S.A. § 29-33	Permit system	Both
Delaware	11 Del C. § 1448B	USC without permit	Both
Dist. of Columbia			Loss of 15.4 to person known to police; family members

**Laws vary by state**

Diagram illustrating the process: A (red stick figure) and B (orange stick figure) are shown. A curved arrow from A to B is labeled "Check on B". A curved arrow from B to A is labeled "Check on A".

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### Federal background checks

U.S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

OMB No. 1140-0020

#### Firearms Transaction Record

**WARNING: You may not receive a firearm if prohibited by Federal or State law. The information you provide will be used to determine whether you are prohibited from receiving a firearm. Certain violations of the Gun Control Act, 18 U.S.C. 921 et. seq., are punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and/or up to a \$250,000 fine.**

Read the Notices, Instructions, and Definitions on this form. Prepare in original only at the licensed premises ("licensed premises" includes business temporarily conducted from a qualifying gun show or event in the same State in which the licensed premises is located) unless the transaction qualifies under 18 U.S.C. 922(c). All entries must be handwritten in ink. "PLEASE PRINT."

**Section A - Must Be Completed Personally By Transferee/Buyer**

1. Transferee's/Buyer's Full Name (If legal name contains an initial only, record "IO" after the initial. If no middle initial or name, record "NMN")  
Last Name (including suffix (e.g., Jr, Sr, II, III)) First Name Middle Name

2. Current State of Residence and Address (U.S. Postal abbreviations are acceptable. Cannot be a post office box.)  
Number and Street Address City County State ZIP Code

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### Federal background checks

11. Answer the following questions by checking or marking "yes" or "no" in the boxes to the right of the questions.

Question	Yes	No
a. Are you the actual transferee/buyer of the firearm(s) listed on this form? <b>Warning: You are not the actual transferee/buyer if you are acquiring the firearm(s) on behalf of another person. If you are not the actual transferee/buyer, the licensee cannot transfer the firearm(s) to you. Exception: If you are picking up a repaired firearm(s) for another person, you are not required to answer 11.a. and may proceed to question 11.b. (See Instructions for Question 11.a.)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Are you under indictment or information in any court for a <b>felony</b> , or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year? (See Instructions for Question 11.b.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Have you ever been convicted in any court of a <b>felony</b> , or any other crime for which you could have been imprisoned for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation? (See Instructions for Question 11.c.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Are you a fugitive from justice? (See Instructions for Question 11.d.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? <b>Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution? (See Instructions for Question 11.f.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Have you been discharged from the Armed Forces under <b>dishonorable</b> conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Are you subject to a court order restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner? (See Instructions for Question 11.h.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Have you ever been <b>convicted</b> in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Felony** (highlighted in green)

**Marijuana user** (highlighted in green)

**Mental illness - COURT judgment** (highlighted in green)

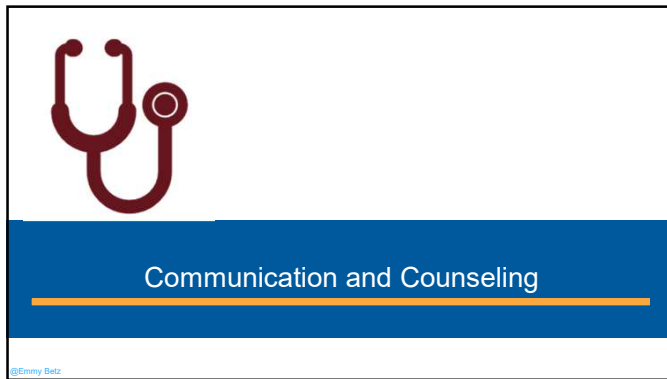
**Domestic violence** (highlighted in green)

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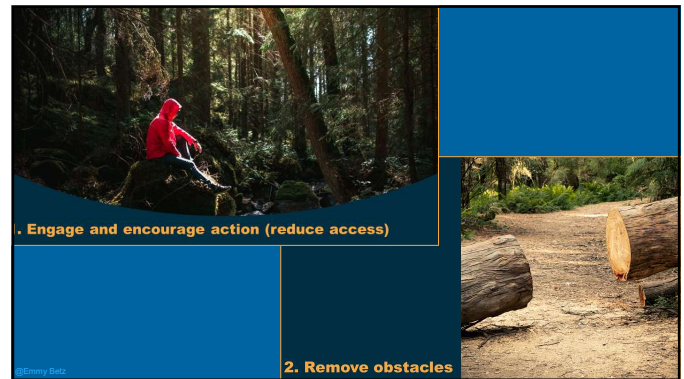
### STATE SURVEY OF TEMPORARY TRANSFER LAWS AND TRANSFER-BACK LIABILITY

Type of Temporary Transfer Law	States With the Legal Provision
Background check requirement for private transfer	CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, HI, IA, IL, MA, MD, MI, NC, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OR, PA, RI, VT, WA
Temporary transfer exception	CA, CO, DE, HI, IA, IL, MD, NE, NM, NY, OR, PA, VT, WA
Specific provision on liability of firearm owner for temporary transfer	CO
Law addressing liability for returning firearm to a person who temporarily surrenders it	None

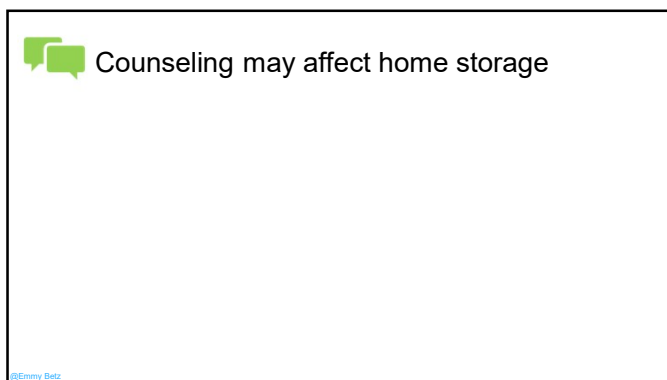
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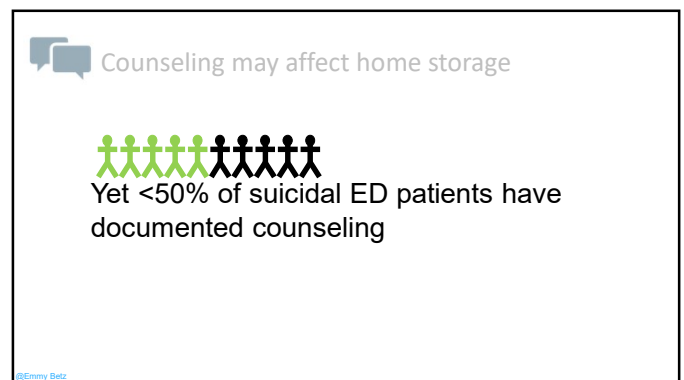
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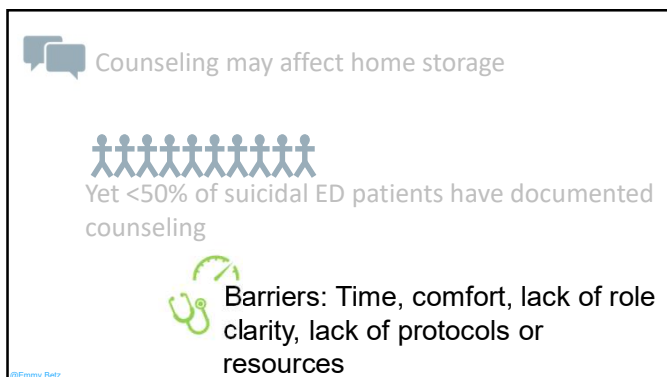
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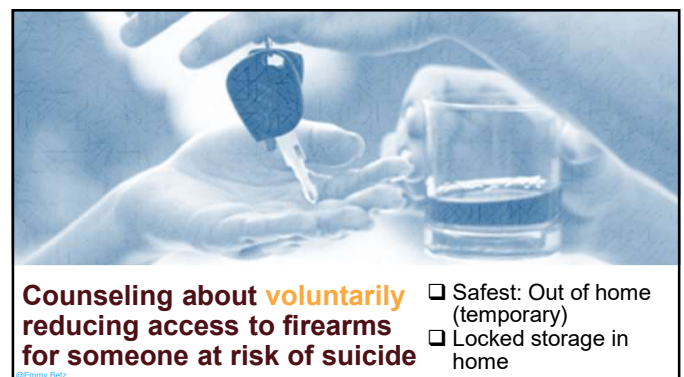
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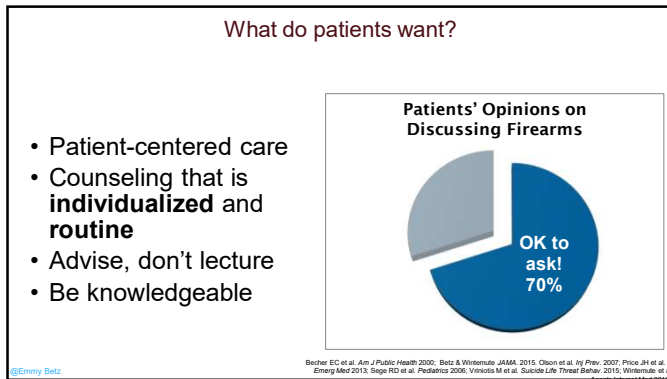
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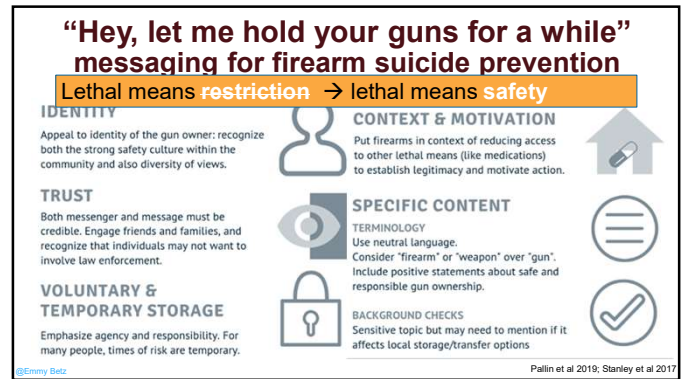
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Eg: “What do you think about storing your guns to improve?”

Eg: “Have you thought about how you can share your guns?”

Eg: “Let’s talk about how to lower the risk of you.”

**“ASKING is not the problem, it is the SHARING with the Government/ THIRD PARTIES that becomes the issue!”**

Knoepke et al, West J Emerg Med. 2017

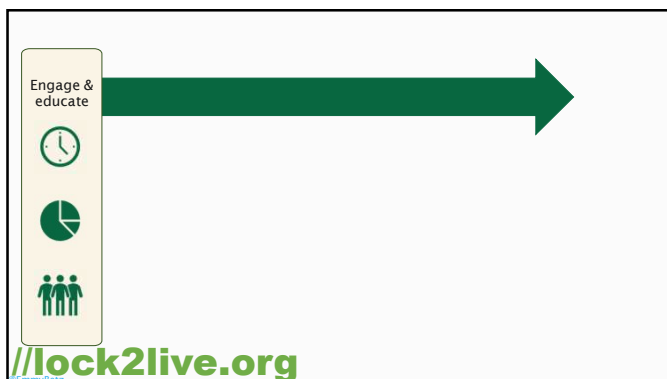
**NOT give up, dispose of, relinquish your guns**

Focus on the (hopefully) temporary nature of both the risk and relocation of the guns

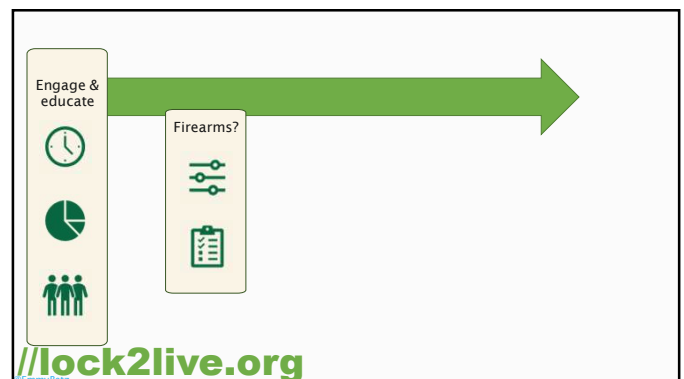
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## Preference questions

"How open are you to storing your firearms temporarily with someone else, away from your home?"

//lock2live.org

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"How open are you to storing your firearms temporarily with someone else, away from your home?"

"When looking for storage options, how concerned are you about cost?"

//lock2live.org

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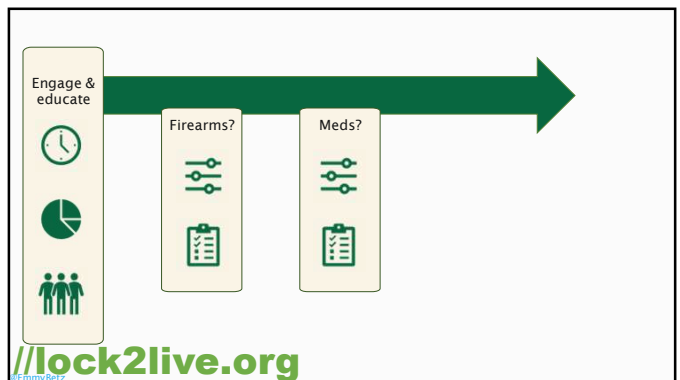
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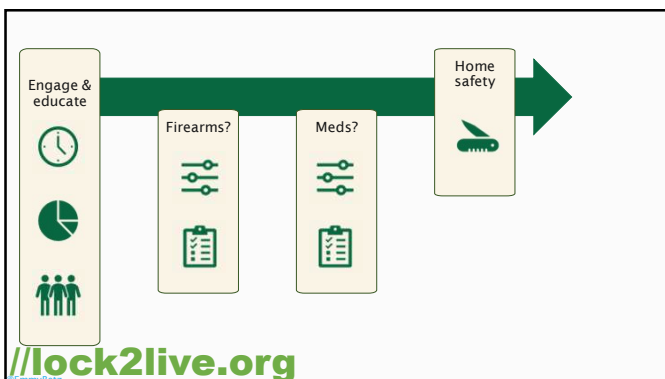
"How open are you to storage options that involve a background check?"

//lock2live.org

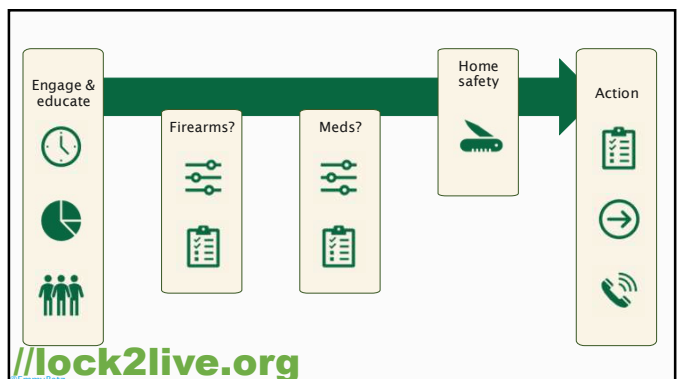
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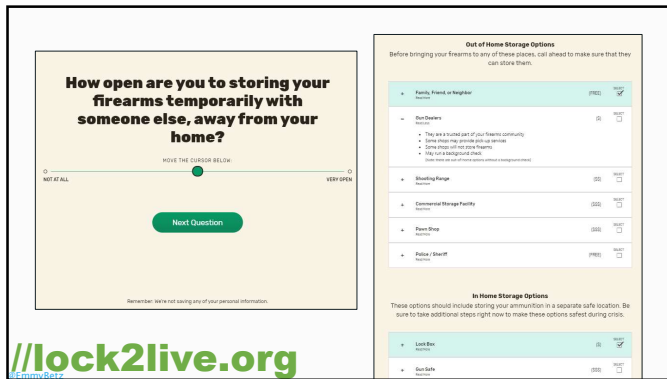
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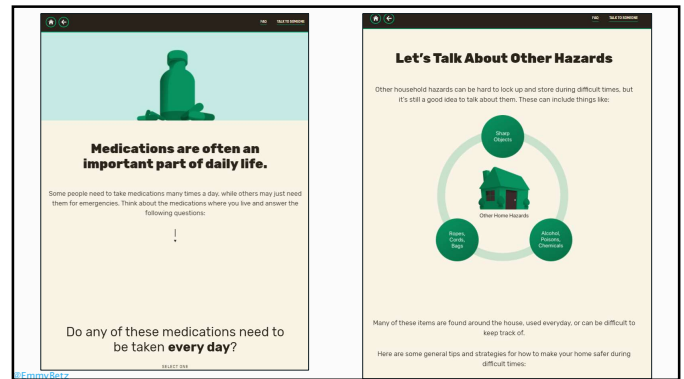
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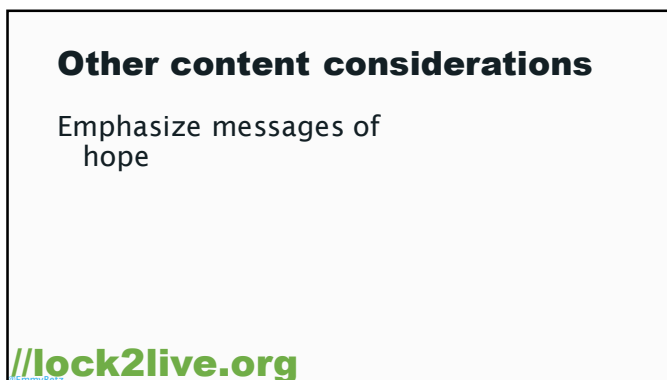
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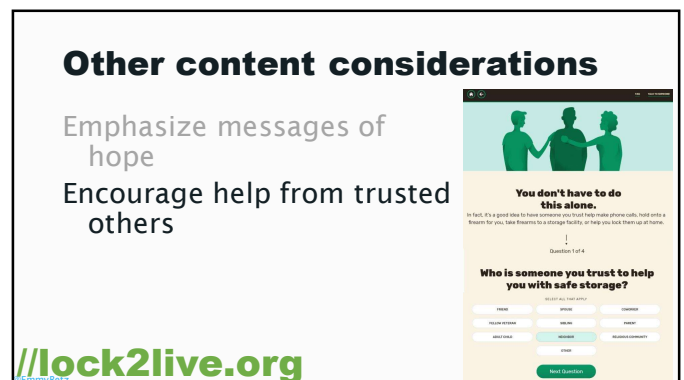
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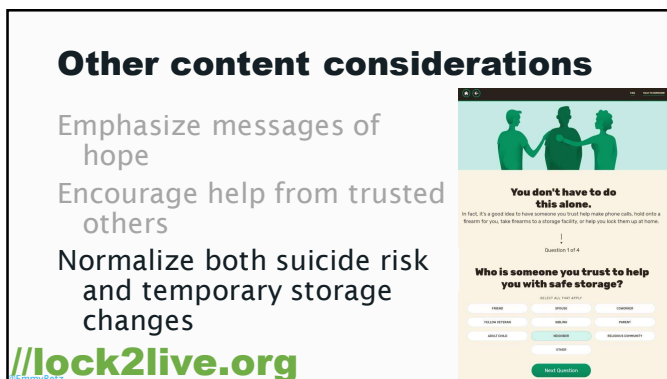
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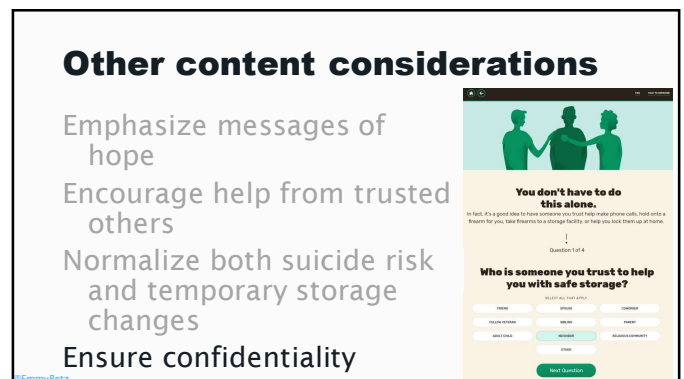
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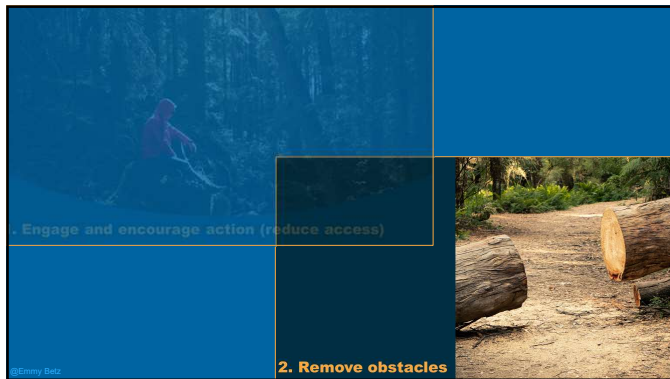
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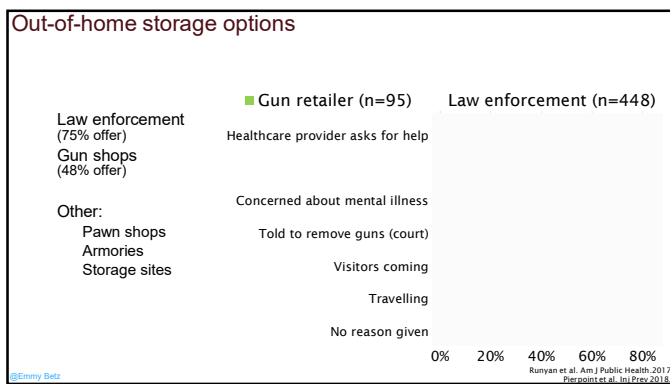
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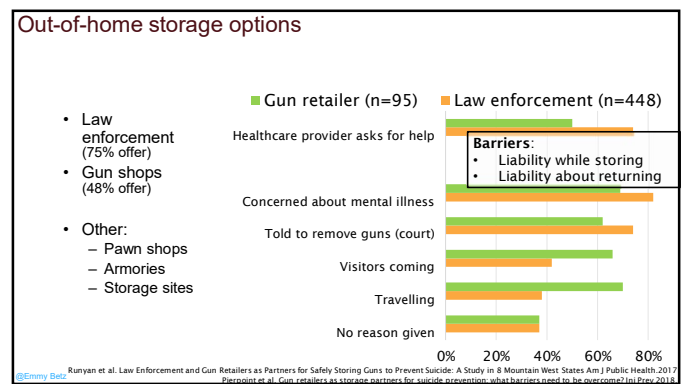
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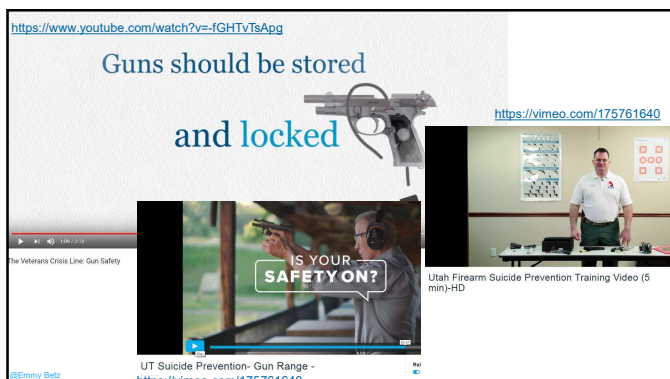
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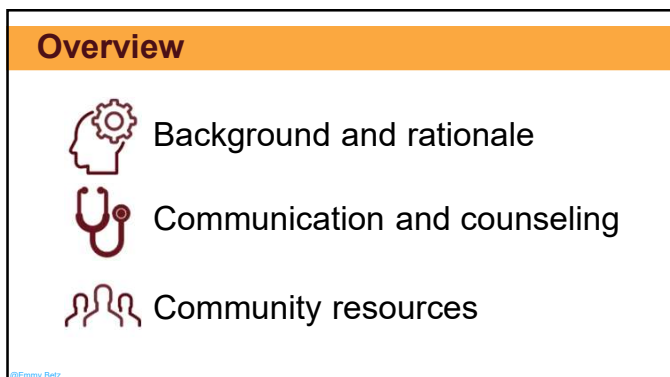
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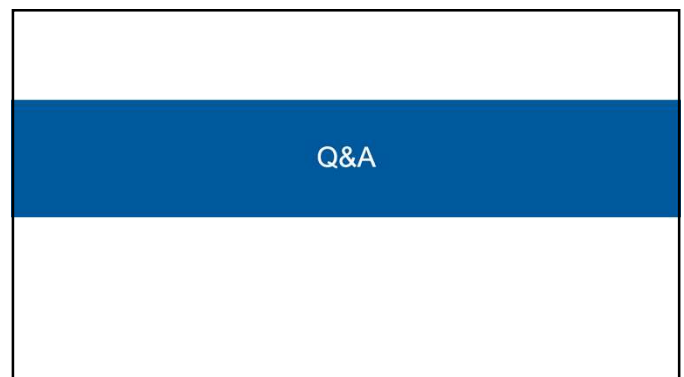
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